

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 /067 W

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P 251103Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4102

INFO USDEL JEC PARIS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 3466

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1 (DATE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE)

TAGS: PFOR, VN, VS

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE REACTION TO UNITED STATES INACTION

1. DEPARTMENT MAY BE INTERESTED IN FOLLOWING COMMENTS HEARD RECENTLY
BY MISSION OFFICERS FROM VIETNAMESE IN SAIGON REACTING TO FAILURE OF US

TO REACT TO CRITICAL MILITARY SITUATION CREATED BY NORTH VIETNAMESE
OFFENSIVE:

2. NGUYEN TU BAN, FORMER SENATOR NOW PROFESSOR, ASKED EMBOFF AT
RECEPTION MARCH 22 WHAT HE THOUGHT OF THE CREDIBILITY OF THE USG NOW.
WHAT WILL OTHER COUNTRIES THINK WHEN THEY SEE HOW THE US TREATS AN
ALLY? EMBOFF AGREED US CREDIBILITY UNHAPPILY HAD SUFFERED, BUT SAID
HE HOPEFUL OF PASSAGE OF SUPPLEMENTAL SOON.

3. DR. PHILLIP THO, SAIGON CATHOLIC LEADER, ON EVENING OF MARCH 24
ASKED WHAT THE UNITED STATES WAS GOING TO DO IN THE CRISIS. HE
ASSUMED PRESIDENT WOULD ACCEPT ADVICE OF GENERAL WESTMORELAND
AND HAD TO BE TOLD OF CONGRESSIONAL CONSTRAINTS WHICH LIMITED
EXECUTIVE BRANCH SCOPE OF ACTION.

4. COLONEL DUONG HIEU NGHIA, HEAD OF GVN DELEGATION TO FPJMT,
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TOLD EMBOFF MARCH 25 THAT PRESTIGE OF UNITED STATES WAS SINKING

BECAUSE OF U.S. FAILURE TO ACT, HE POINTED OUT THAT NVA IN MR-3 WERE SO CONFIDENT THAT U.S. WOULD NOT INTERVENE THAT THEY NEGLECTED TO PAY ATTENTION TO CONCEALMENT FROM THE AIR. THEY VERY VULNERABLE TO B-52 STRIKES. AGAIN CONGRESSIONAL CONSTRAINT ON EXECUTIVE EXPLAINED.

5. IN CONVERSATION MARCH 24 WITH EMBOFFS, LOCAL BUSINESSMEN TRAN QUI THANH AND KHUONG HUU DIEN EXPRESSED INCOMPREHENSION AT THE SEEMINGLY UNCONCERNED ATTITUDE OF U.S. IN THE FACE OF WHAT IS AN OBVIOUS AND IMMINENT THREAT TO THE VERY LIVES OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE. THESE MEN PLANNING PRIVATELY FUNDED CAMPAIGN TO EXPLAIN REALITIES OF VIETNAM TO AMERICAN PUBLIC.

6. DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL THAT CAPTAIN TO OF THE DRV EXPRESSED HIS VIEW CONCERNING U.S. INFERIORITY TO THE SOVIET UNION (SAIGON 3383). TO ALSO NOTED THAT THE CONGRESS HAS INDICATED SUPPORT OF THE DRV POSITION CONCERNING INDOCHINA AND FURTHER STATED THAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE MUST ACCEPT THE FACT THAT THE U.S. IS NO LONGER THE WORLD'S GREATEST POWER.

7. REQUEST THAT PERSONAL NAMES IN PARA 2 THROUGH 5 ABOVE BE PROTECTED.
LEHMANN

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